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## **GEVA THEATRE PRESENTS**

**The Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts' Production of**  
**And So We Walked:**  
**An Artist's Journey Along the Trail of Tears**

**Rochester, N.Y.** — Geva Theatre presents the one-woman show, *And So We Walked*, written and performed by DeLanna Studi, from April 4th - April 23rd. The show is directed by Corey Madden, an award-winning writer and director who has worked on the show since its inception.

Geva Theatre acknowledges that Rochester is on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Onödowá'ga, or the Seneca people. They have stewarded this land for generations, and we pay respect and give thanks to their elders past and present. While DeLanna Studi's beautiful memoir-style play focuses on the experience of the Cherokee and their removal from their traditional lands on what is known as the Trail of Tears, it is also the story of a young woman's journey to understanding her own identity. Stories like this one are integral to the comprehensive history of this country and the people who were here before it was founded.

DeLanna Studi, Cherokee performance artist and activist, shares a powerful, multifaceted dramatic memoir in *And So We Walked: An Artist's Journey Along the Trail of Tears*. This frank, heartwarming, and inspiring story recounts the experience of a contemporary Cherokee woman (Studi) who, with her father, embarks on an incredible 900-mile journey along the Trail of Tears to truly understand her own identity and the conflicts of her Nation. The play recounts the six-week journey, which retraced the path

her great-great grandparents took in the 1830s during the forced relocation of 17,000 Cherokee from their homelands.

*And So We Walked* draws on extraordinary interviews, historical research, and the artist's personal experience to convey the complexities and conflicts with which the Cherokee wrestle. Studi received the 2016 Butcher Scholar Award from The Autry Museum of the American West in acknowledgement of her work on *And So We Walked*.

"We are so delighted to be bringing DeLanna Studi's powerful and compelling *And So We Walked* here to Geva," said Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson, "and grateful to be partnering with Friends of Ganondagan on our Engagement programming in conjunction with this production. Both our Mondays at Geva on April 10th and Insights post-show conversation on April 19th will deepen the conversation around this beautiful production."

Produced in conjunction with the production of *And So We Walked*, the **Engagement Department at Geva** hosts **two series**, which in this case are presented in collaboration with **Friends of Ganondagan**. **Engagement at Geva events are free and open to the public.**

- First, for **Mondays at Geva**, held **Monday April 10th, 6pm until 9pm**, the program begins with performances from Perry Ground (Onondaga, Turtle Clan) and Daystar Dance, which is led by Daystar Rosalie Jones (Pembina Chippewa). The featured visual artists for this art opening include G. Peter Jemison (Seneca, Heron Clan), and Natasha Smoke Santiago (Mohawk, Turtle Clan). Mondays at Geva will culminate with a Clan Mother Conversation featuring Clan Mother Louise Herne (Mohawk, Bear Clan), Michelle Schenandoah (Oneida, Wolf Clan), and DeLanna Studi (Cherokee). **Refreshments will be served.**
- The following week we present **Geva Insights - April 19th following the 7:30pm performance of *And So We Walked***. Featuring **Pete Hill** (Cayuga, Heron Clan) who is Special Initiatives Director at Native American Community Services of Erie and Niagara Counties, Inc (NACS) as well as an Indigenous trauma expert. This onstage, post-performance conversation is free and open to the public, but a ticket is required to attend the performance. *Geva Insights* conversations are recorded and posted on the Geva YouTube Channel.

*And So We Walked* has an incredible team, starting with Creator and Performer DeLanna Studi, and Director Corey Madden. The creative team includes Set Design by John Coyne (*Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, Shakespeare Theatre Company), Sound and Music

Design by the late Bruno Louchouarn (*Carmina Terra*, Pittsburgh Ballet), Costume Design by Andja Budincich (*Hollow*, Dixon Place) and Lighting/Projections Design by Norman Coates (*Prince of Central Park*, Broadway). *And So We Walked* was originally produced by the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts. The *And So We Walked* tour is produced by Octopus Theatricals, and co-represented by Octopus Theatrical and Indigenous Performance Productions.

### **Learn more about DeLanna and the production team:**

**DeLANNA STUDI (Creator, Performer)** Originally from Liberty, Oklahoma, DeLanna Studi is a proud citizen of the Cherokee Nation. Her theater credits include the First National Broadway Tour of the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning play *August: Osage County*; Off-Broadway's *Informed Consent* at Duke Theater on 42nd Street; and regional theater credits at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage at The Armory (*Astoria: Part One and Two*), Cornerstone Theater Company, Indiana Repertory Theater and others. DeLanna has originated roles in more than 18 world premieres, including 14 Native productions. She has done more than 800 performances of the Encompass "Compassion Play" *KICK*, a one-person show written by Peter Howard that explores the power of images, stereotypes, and Native American mascots. Her roles in the Hallmark/ABC mini-series *Dreamkeeper* and Chris Eyre's *Edge of America* have won her numerous awards. She is an ensemble member of America's only Equity Native American theater company, Native Voices at the Autry. DeLanna serves as chair of SAG-AFTRA's National Native Committee, which has, under her leadership, produced an award-winning film about American Indians in the entertainment industry and created a "Business of Acting" workshop that tours Indian Country. DeLanna was the winner of the 2016 Butcher Scholar Award from the Autry Museum of the American West. She mentors for the Mentor Artist Playwright Program, Young Native Playwrights and American Indian Film Institute's Tribal Touring Program. Her artist-in-residences include the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Wisconsin (where she co-taught "Native American Oral Histories and Storytelling" and "American Indians in Film") and Brown University. *And So We Walked* is her first play.

**COREY MADDEN (Director)** Corey Madden is an award-winning writer and director as well as a national leader in the performing and visual arts. Corey has worked on *And So We Walked* since its inception seven years ago supporting DeLanna Studi's research and writing, as well as directing the play at the Carthage International Theatre Festival, Portland Center Stage, Triad Stage, Trinity Repertory, Native Voices Theatre, and the Process Series at UNC Chapel Hill. Corey was Associate Artistic Director of the Mark Taper Forum from 1993-2007 where she produced 300 premieres by Robert Lepage, Anthony Minghella, Anna Deavere Smith, Tony Kushner, Lisa Loomer, August Wilson, Luis Alfaro, and many, many others. In 2007 with her late husband, Bruno Louchouarn, Corey founded L'Atelier Arts which created multi-disciplinary projects including *Sol Path* and *Rain After Ash* commissioned by Fulcrum Arts'A×S Festival; *Tales of the Old West* for the Autry Museum; *Rock, Paper, Scissors* for Childsplay Theatre (Best Production, Arizona Theatre Awards); and *Day for Night* presented at GLOW in Santa Monica

and restaged in Poland for the Transatlantyk Film and Music Festival. Madden is the current Executive Director of the Monterey Museum of Art and the former Executive Director of the Kenan Institute for the Arts. Madden's newest project *Numbered Days* will premiere in a podcast produced by The Fountain Theatre in Los Angeles next February.

### **THOMAS S. KENAN INSTITUTE FOR THE ARTS**

The Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts is a creative catalyst that encourages and supports the exploration and development of new knowledge to transform the way artists, organizations, and communities approach creative challenges. The Kenan Institute believes that artists can contribute their creative ideas, visionary leadership, and novel strategies to strengthen our culture, build business, and generate innovative ideas.

### **OCTOPUS THEATRICALS**

Founded by creative producer Mara Isaacs, Octopus Theatricals collaborates with artists and organizations to foster an expansive range of compelling theatrical works for local and global audiences. We eschew boundaries—aesthetic, geopolitical, institutional—and thrive on a nimble and rigorous practice. Current projects include: *Hadestown* by Anaïs Mitchell (Broadway, 8 Tony Awards including Best Musical; Grammy Award, Best Musical Theater Album); *Iphigenia*, a new opera by Wayne Shorter and Esperanza Spalding; *In The Same Tongue* created by choreographer Dianne McIntyre with music by Diedre Murray; *Social! The Social Distance Dance Club* conceived by Steven Hoggett, Christine Jones & David Byrne; *Dreaming Zenzile* by Somi Kakoma; *And So We Walked* by DeLanna Studi; *Theatre for One* (in person and virtual) and many more. Octopus Theatricals is also home to the Producer Hub, an online resource supporting independent producers in the experimental and performing arts sectors. [www.octopustheatricals.com](http://www.octopustheatricals.com)

### **INDIGENOUS PERFORMANCE PRODUCTIONS**

Indigenous Performance Productions, a nonprofit corporation (IPP), is a by/for Indigenous organization that brings the rich cultural content emerging from Indigenous nations of Turtle Island and beyond to stages around the world. As the only organization of its kind on the continent, IPP works to replace the stories that have been written and told about Indigenous people with stories by Indigenous people. IPP's mission is to produce, promote, present, manage and advance education around Indigenous performing arts and artists. IPP is celebrating its first touring original production "Welcome to Indian Country", recipient of the National Performance Network Creation, Production and Storytelling awards. More information might be found at [www.indigenousperformance.org](http://www.indigenousperformance.org)

*And So We Walked: An Artist's Journey Along the Trail of Tears* is produced with additional support from Media Sponsor WXXI.

*And So We Walked* begins performances on April 4th and runs on the Wilson Stage through April 23rd. Tickets can be purchased online at [gevatheatre.org](http://gevatheatre.org), or by phone, 585-232-GEVA(4382)

## **About Geva Theatre Center**

Founded in 1972, Geva Theatre Center is a not-for-profit, professional theatre company dedicated to creating and producing professional theatre productions, programs, and services of a national standard.

The 516-seat Elaine P. Wilson Stage is home to a wide variety of performances, from musicals to American and world classics. The 180-seat Ron & Donna Fielding Stage is home to Geva's series of contemporary drama, comedy, musical theatre, and new play development programs. In addition, the Fielding Stage hosts visiting companies of both local and international renown.

Geva offers a wide variety of educational, engagement, and literary programs, nurturing audiences and artists alike. Geva Theatre Center sits on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Onödowá'ga, or "the people of the Great Hill." In English, they are known as the Seneca people, "the keeper of the western door." They have stewarded this land through generations, and Geva pays respect and gives thanks to their elders, past and present.

Geva is under the leadership of Artistic Director Elizabeth Williamson and Executive Director Christopher Mannelli.

Find out more about Geva Theatre Center at [GevaTheatre.org](http://GevaTheatre.org) or by connecting with us on social media. Facebook: [facebook.com/gevatheatrecenter](https://www.facebook.com/gevatheatrecenter), Twitter: [@gevatheatre](https://twitter.com/gevatheatre), Instagram: [@gevatheatre](https://www.instagram.com/gevatheatre), LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/geva-theatre-center](https://www.linkedin.com/company/geva-theatre-center).

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